

Lexical and functional decomposition in Syntax: A view from Phonology

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In recent years many lexical elements in the syntactic tree have been reanalyzed as being part of the functional sequence (f-seq). Furthermore, it is argued (Starke 2009, Caha 2009, Lundquist 2008, Ramchand 2008 etc., approach known as Nanosyntax) that all features are merged into the syntactic tree as individual terminals. This paper explores the effects of this change on the syntax-phonology interface, addressing two problems for language modularity and offering the lexicon as the locus of communication between the two modules

First issue is the sensitivity of prosody to the lexical/functional distinction between words. Selkirk (1995) and Truckenbrodt (1999, 2007) *inter alia* argue that the constraints relating syntactic and prosodic structure apply to lexical elements and projections (nouns, verbs, adjectives), but not to functional elements (determiners, auxiliaries, etc.). However, in Nanosyntax lexical categories are reanalyzed as a sequence of formal features. Ramchand (2008) decomposes the Verb and VP into three functional parts: InitP, ProcP and ResP. Lundquist (2008) looks at participles and nominalizations, supporting the view that roots are acategorical, their category being determined by the functional morpheme dominating them. Whatever defines N, V or A is of functional nature, and there is no feature common to all 'lexical' categories, or even to all members of one category.

Lexicon subcategorisation is offered as the solution, already introduced in phonology e.g. to account for allomorphy that is not optimizing (e.g. Bye 2006, Paster 2005). Mapping lexicon subsets to different phonological behavior, in this case different prosodification of lexical and functional words, is achieved by indexed constraints (Pater 2009) similar to McCarthy and Prince's (1995, 1999) relativization of faithfulness constraints to roots and affixes. Furthermore, this approach incorporates the fact that some function words spelling out functional projections (e.g. complementizers 'whether', 'however etc., prepositions 'over', 'beyond' etc.) behave prosodically like lexical words.

The second issue is the prosodic marking of Focus, and (Contrastive)Topic. Most literature assumes that they are privative features (F, T, CT) on syntactic nodes, marked by syntactic movement, morpheme markers, prosodic phrasing, pitch accent and intonational contour. In Prosodic Phonology, constraints 'see' these syntactic features (Align-F, Stress-Focus), which is undesirable if modularity is to be maintained, and they fail to connect specific tones or contours to different information structure being marked.

Using the Nanosyntactic view that features are merged into the tree individually and that lexical entries consist of phonological information paired with a syntactic structure they spell out. a suprasegmental affix pairing a H* tone with F feature is parallel to a segmental affix marking focus and topic e.g. in Japanese (Yamato 2007) or Kĩtharaka (Abels and Muriungi 2006). Lexical entries for F and CT features in English (Ladd 1996, Buring 2007) would be < /H*/, F >, < /L+H*L-H%/, CT >, just as the past suffix is < /id/, Past >. The lexical entry for focus in Chichewa (Truckenbrodt 1999) spells out the F feature as a Prosodic Phrase. This allows us to capture the syntax-phonology interface via the lexicon, without sacrificing the idea of modularity.